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FM AMEMBASSY PHNOM PENH  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7024  
INFO RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 1522

UNCLAS PHNOM PENH 001268

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE  
SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A  
TAGS: [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [CB](#)  
SUBJECT: PHNOM PENH OFFICE OF UN HIGH COMMISSIONER FOR  
HUMAN RIGHTS IS EFFECTIVE

REF: STATE 73151

¶1. (SBU) The Phnom Penh office of the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) has done a good job of monitoring and publicizing human rights abuses in Cambodia. Its staff has for the most part been responsible and professional. In a sea of NGO and inter-governmental organization offices in Cambodia, the OHCHR is one we often turn to when we need to compare notes on a specific human rights cases. For example, embassy officers met recently with OHCHR representatives to discuss the backgrounds of the various candidates for the Khmer Rouge Tribunal's judges and prosecutors. The OHCHR has also been active in technical cooperation focused on legal reform in Cambodia.

¶2. (SBU) OHCHR's relations with the government have not been smooth. The office has been singled out for criticism by the government on a number of occasions. Most recently, Prime Minister Hun Sen lashed out at the UN's Special Representative for Human Rights in Cambodia, Yash Ghai, accusing him of injecting himself into Cambodia without any background. The Prime Minister dismissed him as a long-term tourist, refused to meet him, and called on UN Secretary General Kofi Annan to withdraw him.  
MUSSOMELI